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CAPT. JOSEPH DANIELS.

ADELE B. LOOSCAN,

HISTORIAN, DAUGHTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS.

The following is a brief sketch of the life of one whose best years were spent at the capitals of Texas, and whose distinguished service as a military man was equaled by his efficiency in the civil service of the Republic of Texas.

Joseph Daniels was born in Boston, Massachusetts, July 26th, 1809. He went to New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1830, and there raised the first military company made up wholly of Americans ever organized in the city. It was called the Louisiana Greys, and he was its first lieutenant, a man named Brush being captain.

When, after the battle of San Jacinto, General Sam Houston, wounded, went to New Orleans, Lieutenant Daniels was detailed to go with his company to meet the general, and escort him to the city. This was the first meeting of the two men, whose acquaintance cemented into the warm friendship which lasted with their lives. The admiration which young Daniels felt for General Houston induced him to follow him to Texas, which he did in 1837, settling first at Houston, then the capital of the Republic.

On the 9th of November, 1838, he was appointed captain of the Milam Guards. His commission was signed by Sam Houston, President, and Geo. W. Hockley, Secretary of War. He remained for two years in Houston, and then, becoming attached to the service of the government of the Republic (holding various positions—chief clerk of the General Land Office under Col. Thos. Wm. Ward at one time, and at another acting postmaster general), he removed his residence with the seats of government to Austin, to Washington-on-the-Brazos, and thence to Austin again.

While in the latter city he became captain of the Travis Guards, and was also appointed aid-de-camp to the executive with the rank of colonel of cavalry, his commission being signed by Sam Houston, President, and Wm. C. Hamilton, Acting Secretary of War, December 5th, 1844.

In June, 1846, Captain Daniels was appointed assistant quarter-

master U. S. A., with rank of captain on the staff of Gen. John A. Quitman. He served as aid to that general in the battles of San Augustine, Coyoacan Batteries, Chapultepec, and Mexico, and was brevetted for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battles of Contreras and Cherubusco.

August 28th, 1847, General Quitman's division was the first to enter the City of Mexico after its capture, and as the quartermaster Major Daniels made all the public seizures, some of which were of great value. He resigned at the close of the war and went to San Francisco, California, where he died May 25th, 1886, at the age of 76 years and 10 months.

Major Daniels left a widow and two children, having been married October, 1839, to Ann Van Versel, of New Orleans, Louisiana. The marriage took place in Houston, Texas, where the only surviving daughter, Josephine F., was born. Three other children died in infancy, and Sam Houston, named after his father's old friend, was born after the removal to California.

The family history of Major Daniels is mingled with the beginnings of colonial independence in New England, and the strong Southern character of his wife, together with their long residence in Louisiana and Texas made them and their family representative of the best of the old South, forming a part of a circle of California society at once distinctive and distinguished.

The son and daughter maintain a deep reverence and love for the old ideals bequeathed to them. Josephine F. Daniels has been a member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas from the first year of the society's organization, always testifying her zeal in the furtherance of objects for which the association was formed. Sam Houston Daniels has long held a highly responsible position in the Bank of California. A business man of the first ability, he takes an active interest in all questions of public importance, and is a member of the patriotic associations, "Sons of Pioneers" and "Sons of the Golden West," who commemorate the lives and services of the California pioneers and important events of the history of the State.

Among the papers of Major Daniels were found a number of army orders issued to him while captain of the Milam Guards, which illustrate the nature of the service of this company in times

of danger from Indians. On November 9th, 1838, Mr. Daniels received his commission as captain of the company he had organized and drilled. In the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of October 27th, 1838, is the following notice:

"The President arrived in the city on Monday last. He was escorted into the city by the Milam Guards. Their commander, Capt. Daniels, has gained much credit for his untiring exertions in behalf of the company, and is reputed one of the best drill officers in the country."

The following orders show that the company was immediately called into service, and they also help to throw light on its movements:

ORDNANCE DEPT.,
HOUSTON, 14th Nov., 1838.

To Capt. Daniels.

SIR: You are hereby authorized to take possession of any public arms you may find in the hands of the citizens of this place.

ROBT. OLMER,
Capt. of Ord'ce.

HEADQUARTERS NEAR McCURLEY'S,
Nov. 29th, 1838.

(By express.)

To Capt. Joseph Daniels, Commanding Milam Guards.

SIR: By order of Gen. Baker I am directed to rendezvous on the Little Brazos at the house of Jesse Webb, 20 miles above Nashville. You will repair to that post with all possible diligence. It is unnecessary to urge dispatch to a soldier.

You will pass through a country infested with small bands of Indians, and it will be necessary to use every precaution to prevent them from stealing horses.

By order of GEO. W. BONNELL,
Major Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS,
NACOGDOCHES, Dec. 2d, 1838.

Capt. Joseph Daniels.

SIR: You will march the Milam Guards to Fort Houston¹ and take command of that post, where you will be joined by the company under the command of Capt. Box. Immediately after your arrival at Fort Houston you will send out spies and ascertain where the enemy is, and if not found in numbers over one hundred you will give them battle. You will use the greatest precaution in the event the enemy is to be found to collect all the force you can. You will, if it is found necessary, order Capt. Worthem's company to join.

Yours respectfully,

K. H. DOUGLASS,
Brig. Gen'l 3rd Brigade, T. M.

P. S.—You will draw from Fort Luz Beef to last 100 men 20 days.

K. H. D.

Brigade Order.

HOUSTON, Jany. 8th, 1839.

To Capt. Joseph Daniels of the Milam Guards.

SIR: With the company under your command you will march forthwith to the Falls of the Brazos² and there station yourself, for the purpose of giving protection to the frontier against Indian depredations.

You will daily send out flankers to the right and left of your position for the purpose of discovery, and you will exercise all the diligence and vigilance which a soldier's pride should always call forth, and which I am sure you will not be wanting in.

You will be as economical as possible, and not consume more of the provisions of that section of the country than necessity shall imperiously require.

You will report as often as convenient your progress in the object contemplated. The destiny of upper Brazos is in a measure committed to the custody of the Milam Guards, and I am sure they

¹Fort Houston was near where Palestine is located, at present the home of Judge John H. Reagan.

²The present site of Waco.

Capt. Joseph Daniels.

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will return from the discharge of that duty with the gratitude of the people as their reward.

Your Obedt.,

MOSELEY BAKER,
Gen. 2nd Brigade.

A. M. TOMKINS,
Aid.

CAMP ARNOLD, BANKS OF THE NAVASOTA,
January 14th, 1839.

To Capt. J. Daniels of the Milam Guard.

SIR: In compliance with an order from you of this date to summon twelve of the Milam Guards to act as jurors in investigating the circumstances attending the death of our unfortunate friend and brother soldier, Sergeant Robt. Hamet Breedin, I have the honor to report that I have performed said duty by appointing John Chenoweth, O'Neill, Wm. G. Evans, Lewis Way, Lyman Tarbox, Best, James Duncan, Lee, Joseph Wells, Thomas Waters, Joseph Little and Jno. E. Jones said jury, and by submitting the following evidence elicited at the inquest, together with the verdict rendered in accordance therewith.

Very respectfully, yr. obt. serv't,

JOS. C. ELDREDGE,
1st Sergeant Milam Guards.

JURY ROOM, Jan. 14th, 1839.

A jury having been empaneled and duly sworn by Capt. Jos. Daniels of the Milam Guards for the purpose of ascertaining the manner and circumstances attending the death of Sergt. R. Hamet Breedin proceeded to the examination of the following witnesses:

Wm. T. Carter being duly sworn, testified as follows: "I, together with Patrick D. Cunningham, was in charge of the pack-mules, and at the time of the accident was in advance of the company, and had stopped at the roadside to let our horses graze and to light a pipe. We dismounted, and I asked Mr. Cunningham twice if his gun was loaded; he replied that it was not. He then laid his rifle in the hollow of his right arm, and primed it. I had a piece of rag rubbed with powder in my hand ready to light. I was facing Mr. Cunningham with my back to the road when the explosion took place. I turned around and saw Sergt. Breedin in the

act of falling from his horse. I ran up and caught him in my arms, and called him twice by his name, but he did not speak. His face was from me, so that I could not see whether he made an attempt to do so. I laid him on the ground, and in less than five minutes he was dead. I heard no words pass between Sergt. Breedin and Mr. Cunningham; had halted about ten minutes when Sergt. B. rode up. He had his back toward us, about fifteen paces distant, and I deem his death to have been purely accidental."

Battinger being called and duly sworn, testified as follows: "Sergt. Beedin, Carter, Cunningham and myself were somewhat in advance of the company. Carter and Cunningham dismounted. I was perhaps sixty yards distant, and heard them speaking of making a fire, but not Breedin. Heard Carter ask Cunningham if his gun was loaded. I did not hear Cunningham reply or pass a word with Sergt. Breedin. Immediately after I heard the explosion I turned and saw Carter catch Breedin as he was falling from his horse in his arms and laid him on the ground. I then ran up and found him dead. I did not hear him speak a word."

Patrick D. Cunningham, being called, stated as follows: "I was in advance of the company driving the pack-mules; stopped with Carter to light a pipe. Carter asked me if my rifle was loaded. I told him no; had forgotten at the time that it was loaded, but since recollect that I fired it off last evening and loaded it again this morning to shoot some game, but before I had primed it the game flew, and I was ordered to assist in packing mules, laid down my rifle and so forgot about its being loaded. Sergeant Breedin rode up a few minutes before the rifle went off. I was holding it in the hollow of my left arm, having just primed, snapped it for the purpose of lighting a rag held by Mr. Carter, when it went off, and I saw Sergt. Breedin falling from his horse. I never had an angry word or dispute with Sergt. Breedin."

The foregoing is the evidence given before the jury at an inquest held on the body of Sergeant R. H. Breedin this day.

(Signed) JOHN CHENOWETH,

JOS. C. ELDRIDGE,

Foreman.

Clerk.

We, the jury, find that Sergeant Robert Hamet Breedin, of the

Milam Guards, came to his death by the accidental discharge of a rifle in the hands of Patrick D. Cunningham.

JOHN CHENOWETH,
Foreman.

By the 21st of February, 1839, the Milam Guards seem to have been again in Houston, as shown by the following receipt:

HOUSTON, Feby. the 21st, 1839.

Rec'd of J. W. White, Lieut. of the Milam Guards, sixteen Public Horses and two Mules in Low order, also six Sadel and Bridels and Two Blankets.

P. CALDWELL,
Q. Master.

On February 24th, of the same year, Captain Daniels received the following:

HOUSTON, TEXAS, February 24th, 1839.

To Joseph Daniels, Esq.

SIR: You are hereby appointed a captain in the first regiment of infantry in the Texian army, and will receive your Commission as soon as the same is ratified by the Senate at their next Session. In the meantime you will discharge faithfully the duties devolving on you as such, and will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

By Order of the President, Mirabeau B. Lamar.

Your obedient Servant,

A. SIDNEY JOHNSTON,
Secretary of War.

The last document in my possession relating to the Milam Guards in connection with Captain Daniels is as follows:

Capt. Daniels of the Milam Guards will deliver to the order of Capt. Holliday twenty muskets belonging to the government.

GEO. W. HOCKLEY,
Col. Ord.

Ord'n Department, 7th October, 1839.

On December 19, 1839, the *Morning Star*, a newspaper published at Houston, Texas, mentions that the Milam Guards are

petitioning Congress for an act of incorporation, and says: "We trust their prayers may be granted. When the fierce savages of the East threatened death and ruin to the frontier settlers, they marched with promptitude to the rescue. Congress should encourage the organization of volunteer forces. * * * To Capt. Daniels and his brave comrades we wish success in their efforts."

When Capt. Daniels entered the service of the government and removed from Houston, James Reilly became captain of the Milam Guards.

The following papers relate to Capt. Daniels's service as captain of the Travis Guards at Austin:

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS, {
County of Travis. }

By the authority of the Republic of Texas and the power vested in me as sheriff of said county, have this day summoned Captain Daniels to call out the Travis Guards to assist in arresting Castro and Flacco, chiefs of the Lappan tribe of Indians, and bring them before some justice of the peace to answer the charge of some of their tribe's having murdered one James Boyse on the 2nd inst.

A. C. MACFARLANE,
Sheriff T. C.

Austin, October 3rd, 1841.

Capt. D.

SIR: You will hold yourself in readiness until you hear from me, as I am going to see Castro and Flacco, and in case of any resistance I will send you a message, when you will proceed to the camp of the Indians, if not otherwise instructed.

Yours,
A. C. MACFARLANE.

Capt. J. Daniels, Travis Guards.

DR. SIR: You will much oblige me by letting the bearer have *five* of the short Roman swords belonging to your company for the use of the Masonic procession.

Yours truly,
GEORGE K. TEULAN,
Chairman Com. Arr.

Austin, June 23rd, 1841.

Besides the actual service in the field performed by these two companies whenever the needs of the country required, they were to the front in all leading social functions. The newspapers of the day publish notices of military balls given to celebrate the battle of San Jacinto, and the journal of the Milam Guards contains the following resolution regarding such a ball: "And be it further resolved, that said ball shall be strictly a military ball, and none others than heads of families, the officers of army and navy will be invited except by special invitation of the committee on invitation. Adopted April 16, 1839. Jos. C. Eldridge, Sec. pro tem."